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★ Feature

HENDERSON HIGH SCHOOL SETS PACE IN MODERN EDUCATION CONCEPTS

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Already Tradition Established (Staff Reporter)

Before the advent of the Kelston High School the nearest secondary school to Henderson was Avondale College, Western districts, that is beyond Avondale, could claim no high school tradition or home-taught pupils. In the main pupils attended Mt. Albert Grammar and Seddon Memorial Technical College. Shortly after Kelston High was opened, on April 1, 1953, the Hon. R. M. Algie, who was then Minister of Education, declared the Henderson High School officially open and Mr A. D. W. Woolcott began as the school's first headmaster. Then in 1957 Rutherford High School began its life. Last year came the separation of Kelston Boys' High School from the Girls' High School so that within a space of nine years four secondary schools had sprung up and nearly 2500 boys and girls were being catered for.

At the Henderson High School administration began in the hands of the Auckland Education Board which soon handed the reins to a committee of management, and although the board kept close tabs on all its affairs, it gave the committee a very

free run.

The committee of management had, as its first chairman, Mr D. Whitlock, who represented the Hobson area. Members of the committee were Mrs E. E. Booth (Te Atatu), Mr G. W. Allwood (Huapai), Mr R. S. Beatt (Massey-Birdwood), the Mayor of Henderson, Mr W. G. Blacklock (Henderson Borough), Mr A. J. Carroll (Riverhead), Mr K. J. H. Cohen (Oratia), Mr E. D. Dorman (Henderson), Mr A. R. Fletcher (Tampaki), Mr J. W. Gardner (Henderson Valley), Mr R. E. Guy (Swanson) and Mr A. J. Woods (Waitakere).

This committee was to reign for three years, until the formation of a Board of Governors in 1956.

Henderson opened with three forms, 143 pupils, 5 masters and 4 mistresses. The first lower 6th form appeared in 1956 and in 1957 two pupils formed the first upper sixth form. They were John Cameron, who holds a record probably unique in New Zealand secondary school history, and R. V. Carlson.

Through the school commencing with third forms and gradually building up as pupils progressed year by year, Cameron, who is today an Auckland accountant, was five times dux of the school. Of Carlson little is known.

The first Henderson High School Board of Governors held its first meeting under the chairmanship of Mr W. G. Blacklock, J.P., a co-opted member and former Mayor of Henderson. Mr R. C. Beatt, the present chairman, and also a co-opted member, was deputy-chairman. Other members of the board were Mr N. I. Borch (Huapai, Riverhead and Swanson), Mr F. J. Burton, J.P. (Massey-Birdwood, Swanson), Mr T. J. Clark (Henderson Borough), Mr J. W. Gardner (Auckland Education Board), Mr G. Holbrow, J.P. (Henderson and Henderson North), Mrs L. P. Leary, B.A. (Governor-General's representative), Mrs H. B. Redgrave (Henderson)

W. Taylor (Hobsonville).

The Henderson roll gradually increased until in 1960 it reached a record total of 788. But after this, with the loss of 50 at the beginning of 1961, the roll has gradually subsided to a total below 650, although this is expected to rise rapidly within the next year or two. The loss of pupils was accounted for by the opening of the Rutherford High School in Te Atatu.

Today the administration of the Henderson High School is headed by the Education Department with the Board of Governors next in line. Directly in line is the Headmaster, who is secretary to the board, the senior assistant master, the senior assistant mistress, the various heads of departments and the teachers of various subjects. There is also a secretary to the headmaster, a secretary's assistant and a book-keeper.

The school is built on 28 acres of land and comprises 22 classrooms, 8 music studios, common rooms, offices, an assembly hall, a larger foyer, a pot shed, a caretaker's residence, a glasshouse and an armoury. It has a soccer ground, a rugby field and a hockey field in winter, and room for at least four cricket wickets in summer. This year marks the addition of the modern swimming pool which is the first in western districts. Six acres is at present in the first stages of development.

Assets which have been accumulated through the efforts of the board, the pupils, the staff, the Home and School Association, and members of the surrounding community, total more than £15,000 in monetary value, although, as Mr Woolcott explained, the value of the assets is far greater to the school than their monetary value suggests.

The Blacklock Hall, named after the first Board of Governors' chairman, is today one of the cultural centres of the

community. Amateur theatre groups invariably use it for productions, such as the Tihirangi Light Opera Club, who presented "The Gondoliers", and it is also used as a concert platform by pupils. Its main use, of course, is for school assemblies.

Tradition is being built up at a great rate to where today Henderson has become a name to be reckoned with both in the sporting field and in the scholastic. And it is the latter phase which

Picture mark

ONE of the interesting developments here has been the sale of early paintings for high prices although, of course, the market has been set by Wellington and Auckland works. In Wellington two small Goldies recently sold at about £560.

There are a good many of Maori subjects painted by Goldie held privately in the land—some were bought at a boom just after World War II as investments—and very likely that once a market for this painter's work is clearly established, more will be offered though probably very firm prices.

Apart from artistic considerations, Goldie paintings are by reason of their Maori subjects an ethnological value.

From the historic aspect, however, the Maori heads painted by Lindauer (born in Pilsen, Bohemia in 1839), who arrived here in 1873, are unique, because Goldie did not turn so easily to the painting of Maori until his return from Paris in 1898. Lindauer painted in a European manner, and with no great inventive skill, but many of his capable works are actual portraits of chiefs of Auckland's very early days.

The Auckland Art Gallery has nine Goldie paintings by 80 Lindauers in the biggest collection of his works in the country. They were gathered by an Auckland hairdresser, Mr H. E. Partridge, a friend of the artist. Partridge had seen the distress in Belgium in World War I and in 1915 to boost the Help the Belgian fund, he offered the collection to the city provided £10,000 was raised here for this appeal. The sum was subscribed and the city was handed its unrivalled collection.

In the city collection are about 100 Kinder watercolours of the early scene. On the market, similar paintings bring about £40. But a good Gully (another early watercolourist) fetches, according to occasional sales, from £300 to 500 gns, though 100 gns is more in keeping with the price for a painting of average quality.

There is also a keen demand for the works of another Auckland painter, Frank Wright, provided these deal with recognizable Auckland scenes, such as the waterfront. Such paintings bring up to £400, but much less eagerly sought after are those by his brother Walter.

I'm told a good scene of early Auckland by Hoyte (of which the gallery has 15 good examples) is worth about £140. But it should be realized that the market for old paintings (as with...)

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